

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
Chicago River Mystery Sheen - Removal Polrep  
Initial and Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Region V

**Subject:** POLREP #1  
Initial & Final  
Chicago River Mystery Sheen

Chicago, IL  
Latitude: 41.8786202 Longitude: -87.6376820

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**From:** Anita Boseman/Andrew Maguire, On-Scene Coordinators

Date: 3/9/2012  
Reporting Period: 3/2/2012 - 3/7/2012

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:
Response Authority: OPA	Response Type: Emergency
Response Lead: EPA	Incident Category:
NPL Status: Non NPL	Operable Unit:
Mobilization Date: 3/2/2012	Start Date: 3/2/2012
Demob Date: 3/2/2012	Completion Date: 3/7/2012
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:
ERNS No.:	State Notification:
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:

#### 1.1.1 Incident Category

#### 1.1.2 Site Description

A sheen of unknown origin was noticed on the Chicago River underneath the Jackson Boulevard bridge in downtown Chicago, IL. It was reported directly to USEPA Region 5 Superfund Division's Emergency Response Branch.

##### 1.1.2.1 Location

The site is located on the Chicago River near S. Wacker Drive between Adams and Jackson in Chicago, IL. The area is in a heavy commercial district in downtown Chicago.

##### 1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The sheen's contents were unknown, however, based on visual observations it appeared to be oil. Therefore, the product was already in a navigable waterway and migration of the product could lead to an impact on Lake Michigan.

#### 1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

On Friday, March 3, 2012, USEPA OSCs Anita Boseman and Andrew Maguire responded to an EPA employee's report of a sheen on the Chicago River. The OSCs observed a sheen ranging from approximately 3 feet wide at the apparent source (east side of river near W Adams St) to approximately 10 feet wide toward the end (east side of river near W Van Buren St). Potential sources included a Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) storm sewer, construction work nearby, and nearby building drainage outfalls to the river. During the investigation into the potential source, rain dissipated the sheen to where it was no longer visible.

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Narrative

Investigations into the characteristics of the sheen and potential sources of the sheen took place at and around the site.

### **2.1.2 Response Actions to Date**

3/2/2012 - Sheen characteristics, documentation and source investigation

3/7/2012 - Inspection of two buildings as potential sources of the sheen.

### **2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)**

On Wednesday, March 7, 2012, OSC Maguire and a representative from MWRD to performed a follow up inspection of the outfalls from 250 S. Wacker Drive and at an adjacent building, 200 S Wacker in an effort to identify potential sources of the sheen. No potential sources were identified during the inspections. Moreover, due to the unrecoverable nature of the sheen, and its dissipation during a rain event, discovering a source was unlikely.

### **2.1.4 Progress Metrics**

<i><b>Waste Stream</b></i>	<i><b>Medium</b></i>	<i><b>Quantity</b></i>	<i><b>Manifest #</b></i>	<i><b>Treatment</b></i>	<i><b>Disposal</b></i>

## **2.2 Planning Section**

### **2.2.1 Anticipated Activities**

Ongoing coordination between USEPA and MWRD regarding sheens into Chicago waterways.

#### **2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities**

None

#### **2.2.1.2 Next Steps**

#### **2.2.2 Issues**

## **2.3 Logistics Section**

No information available at this time.

## **2.4 Finance Section**

### **2.4.1 Narrative**

No contractors (ERRS and START) were mobilized for this site.

## **2.5 Other Command Staff**

No information available at this time.

## **3. Participating Entities**

No information available at this time.

**4. Personnel On Site**

2 - EPA  
1 - MWRD

**5. Definition of Terms**

MWRD - Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago  
OSC - On Scene Coordinator

**6. Additional sources of information****6.1 Internet location of additional information/report****6.2 Reporting Schedule**

This is the Initial and Final POLREP.

**7. Situational Reference Materials**

No information available at this time.